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DEPARTMENT FOR G, DRL/SEA, AND NSC/DEMOC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: PORTUGAL: INPUT FOR THE PRESIDENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS
ROUNDTABLE AT 2007 UNGA

REF: A. SECSTATE 125456

[¶](#)1B. LISBON 2301

[¶](#)1. (U) Embassy Lisbon works closely with the Portuguese government to strengthen its already well-developed democracy and human rights infrastructure. Per ref A request, this cable details Post's efforts to promote the Freedom agenda in Portugal.

Promoting Democracy

[¶](#)2. (U) Since Portugal's peaceful 1974 revolution, Portugal has established a strong, transparent democracy, and sought ways to promote more stable democratic institutions in former colonies in Africa and Asia. As a Mission, we look for avenues to engage through multilateral organizations such as the Community of Portuguese-language Speaking Countries (CPLP) and the Community of Democracies. Post has encouraged CPLP outreach to Guinea Bissau and East Timor for election observers as well as Portugal's participation in the UN mission to stabilize the fragile government in East Timor. In Angola, the Department of Commerce is working with the Portuguese to computerize and advance Angola's judicial system. Embassy Lisbon supports Portugal's outreach efforts to both nations and meets frequently with MFA interlocutors to encourage a robust Community of Democracies chairmanship beginning in November.

[¶](#)3. (U) Emboffs have stressed with MFA officials the importance of promoting freedom of the press and freedom of speech, especially beyond Portugal's borders. Although Portuguese press is free, we urge the Portuguese to dialogue with other nations in Europe and Africa where that is not the case.

Defending Human Rights

[¶](#)4. (U) Embassy Lisbon is active in promoting human rights awareness, most notably on the issues of trafficking and religious tolerance. We support ongoing Portuguese efforts to combat human trafficking by coordinating Embassy visits to NGOs, participating in anti-trafficking conferences, writing op-eds to raise awareness, and sponsoring human rights activists for International Visitor programs. To further religious freedom and tolerance, Post hosts an annual Iftar during Ramadan and has coordinated outreach events with a local Muslim school. Our Office of Public Affairs organizes separate press roll-outs for the annual TIP and Human Rights reports, and provides electronic distribution of these materials in both English and Portuguese.

[¶](#)5. (U) During Portugal's EU Presidency, DRL DAS Barks-Ruggles

and IO DAS Manisha Singh met with Portuguese MFA counterparts to consult on our human rights agenda at the UN (ref B). Portugal intends to present several human rights initiatives, both country-specific and thematic, to the Human Rights Council and the UN's Third Committee.

Hoffman